

# Ellen Gallagher

Painting, works on paper, film and video.



**Born 1965**

Toni Morrison once said that all the future is in the past. Gallagher's extraordinary work explores the near and the distant past. She is an artist who is always looking at time, and what time has done to people. Her work is characterised by a density of imagery and complex, built-up surface detail. It embraces the world of history, fantasy and myth; Gallagher is interested in transformation, mutability, metamorphosis.

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2007/apr/28/art>

oceanography, microscopic life, popular media,

Through processes of accretion, erasure, and extraction, Ellen Gallagher has invented a densely saturated visual language in which overlapping patterns, motifs, and materials pulse with life.

By fusing narrative modes including poetry, film, music, and collage, she recalibrates the tensions between reality and fantasy—

Before her art career, Gallagher worked as a commercial fisherman in Alaska and Maine.

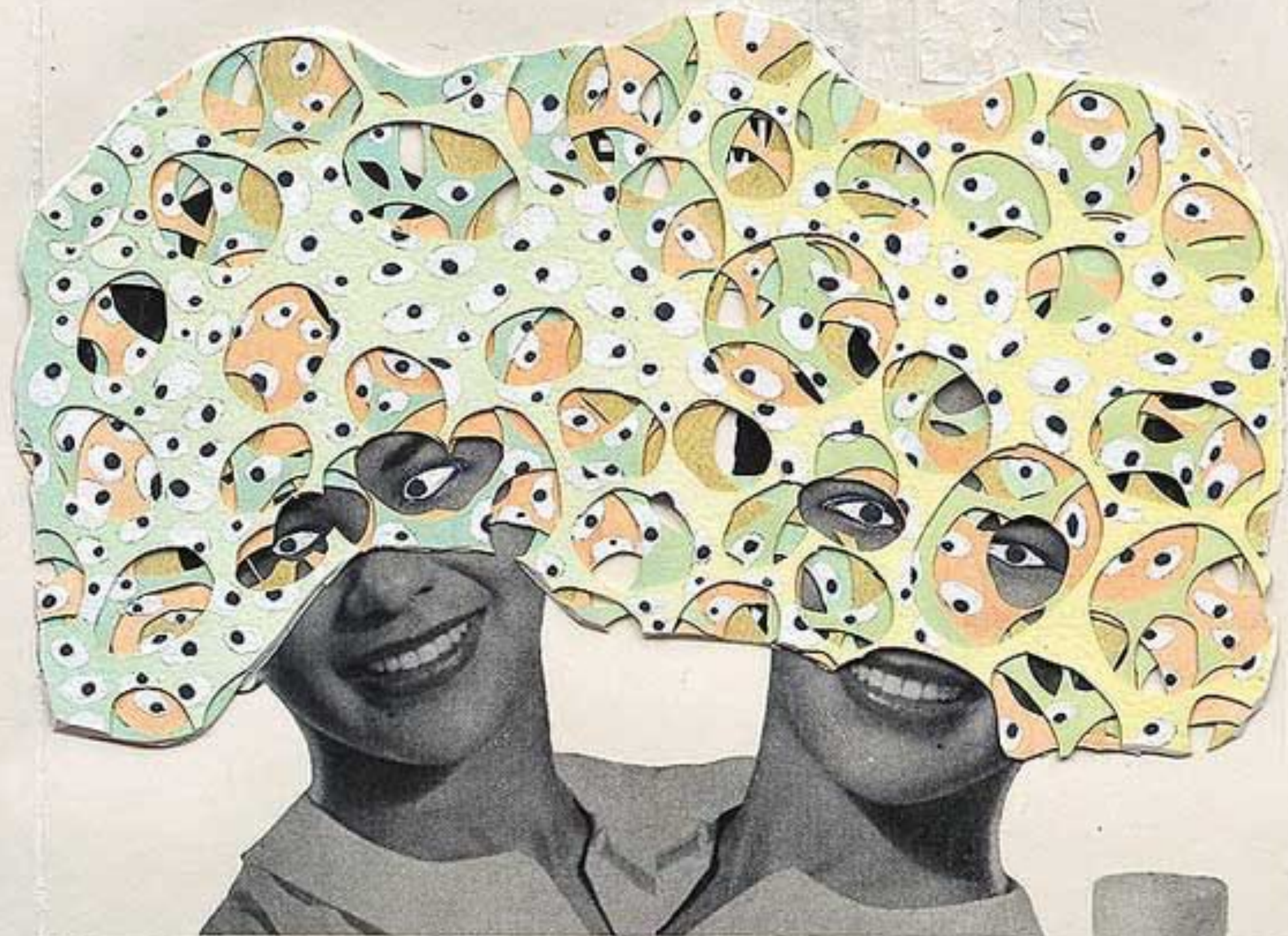
Some of Gallagher's work involves repetitively modifying advertising found in African American focused publications such as *Ebony*, *Sepia*, and *Our World*.<sup>[8][9]</sup> Her most famous pieces are her grid-like collages of magazines grouped together into larger pieces.<sup>[10]</sup> Examples of these are *eXelento* (2004), *Afrylic* (2004), and *DeLuxe* (2005).

**She notes that in the 30s, wigs were called transformations.**

Found archival matter from black lifestyle magazines of the time include adverts for wigs and cosmetics.



Ellen Gallagher, *Wiglette* from *DeLuxe* 2004–2005



# PEGLEG'S

CELESTIAL NAVIGATOR  
CHART YOUR  
SCALP



"WONDERFUL" . . . and  
that is exactly what you will  
say, after you have used Peg-  
leg's Celestial Navigation

"A GOOD HAIR-DO  
NEEDS PEGLEG'S  
CELESTIAL NAVIGATION."

Ask your beautician for a Peg Leg Navigation...  
you will never go back to ordinary navigation...  
once you try Peg Leg's Celestial Navigator

Ask for the jars with the stars!



# Afrofuturism

Afrofuturism is a cultural aesthetic that combines science-fiction, history and fantasy to explore the African-American experience and aims to connect those from the black diaspora with their forgotten African ancestry



*Bird in Hand* 2006

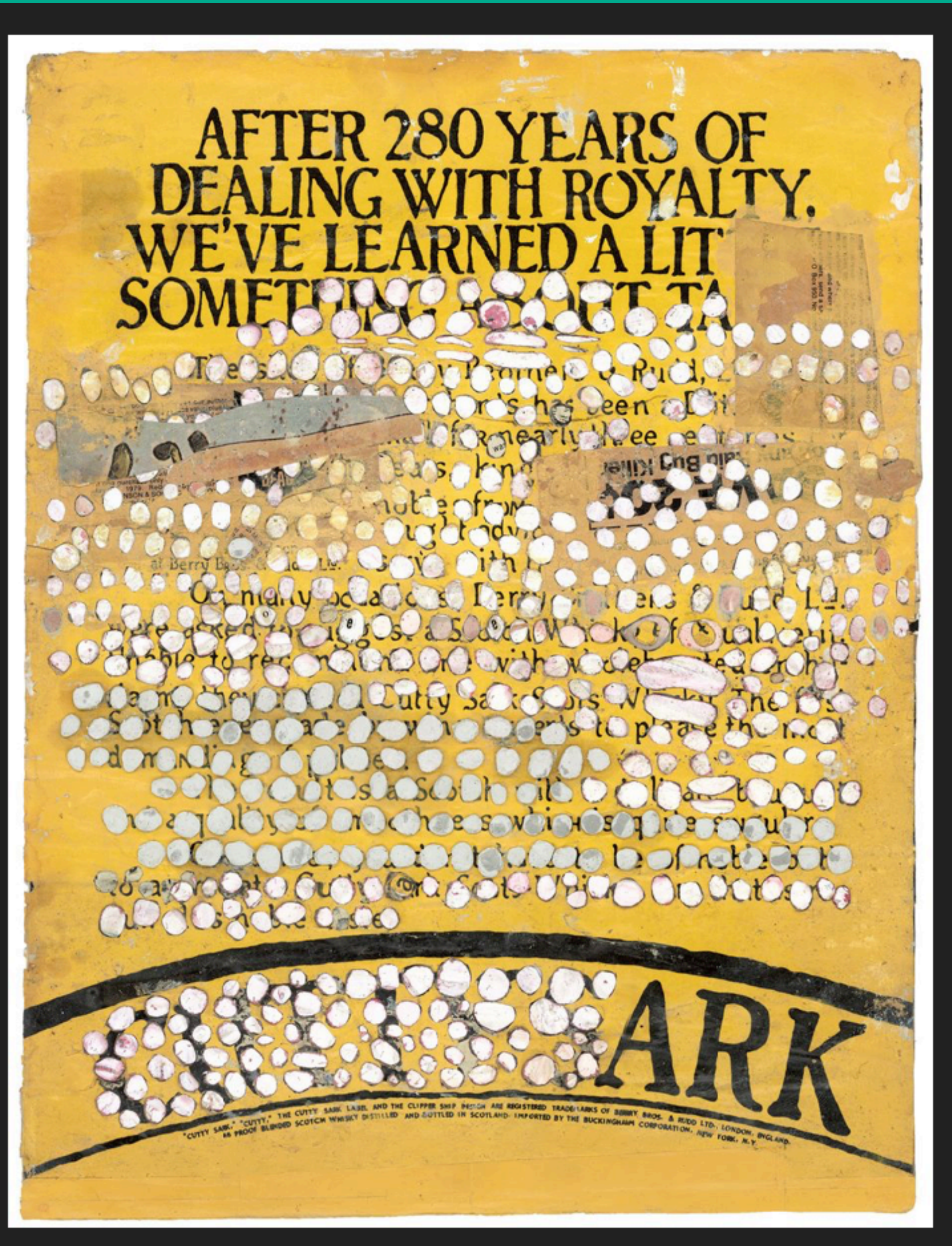


In the “**Ecstatic Draught of Fishes**” (2019), the artist subverts an art historical lineage that begins with Peter Paul Rubens’s “The Miraculous Draught of Fishes”

looking backwards and forwards at the same time,



Peter Paul Rubens, 1577 - 1640  
The Miraculous Draught of Fishes  
1618-19  
Black chalk, pen and oil on paper, stuck on canvas



Beneath what Herman Melville called 'the ocean's skin',  
manifold stories predate and postdate our human sway.

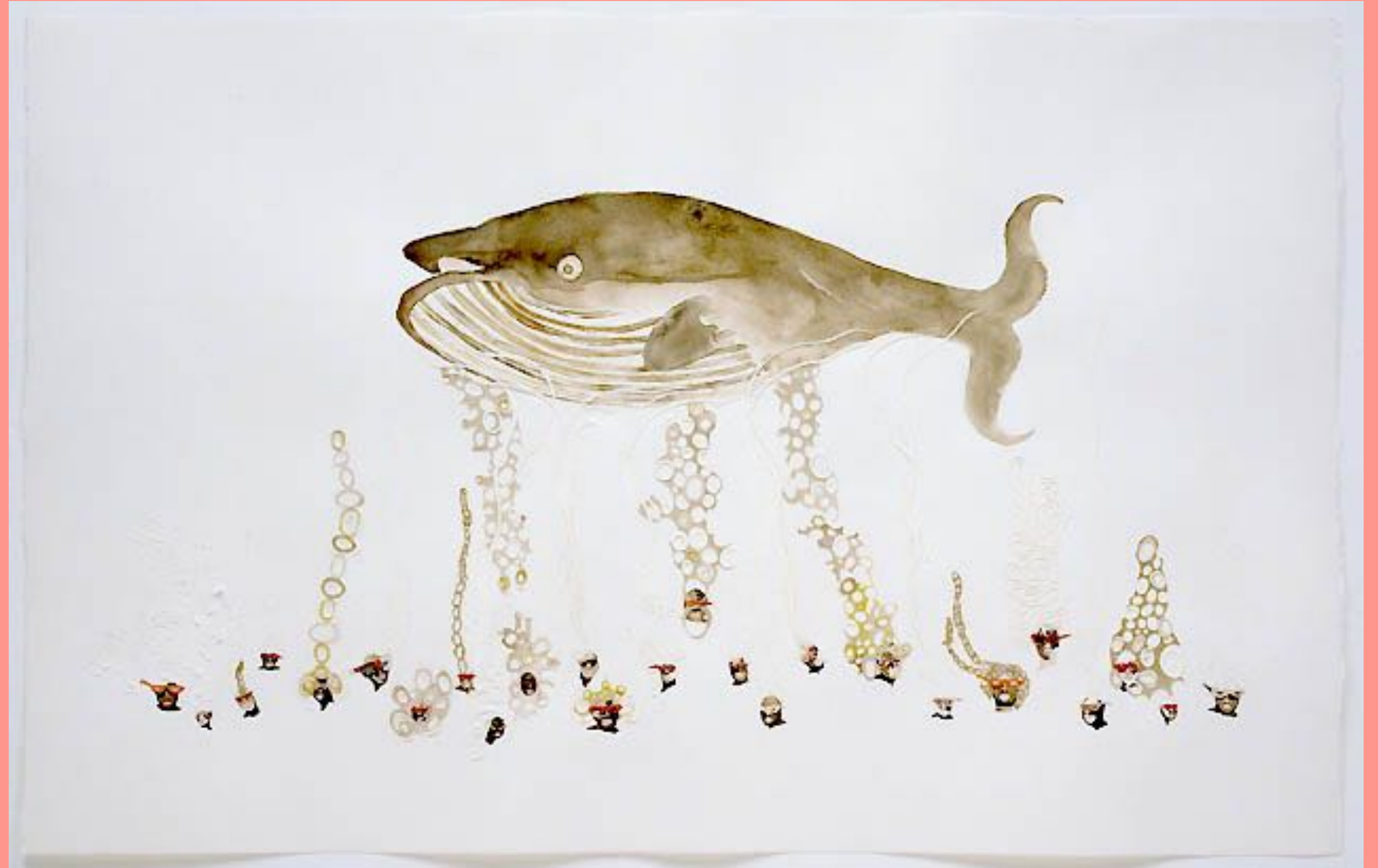






**Edgar Cleijne and Ellen  
Gallagher, Nothing Is...  
(film still)**

Ellen Gallagher  
2013  
16 mm Film and Harp - 5 minutes 48  
seconds - Dimensions variable



*Watery Ecstatic Series*  
2004

Watercolor, ink, oil, plasticine, pencil and cut paper on paper  
26 x 40 3/4 in.

.....through her art, she is attempting to go down to the ocean bed and retrieve the lost, like a deep-sea diver trawling the ocean floor for survivors.

cutting, scraping and manipulating paper enable her to control what is revealed or hidden from sight.

## Creating Layered Surfaces.



This is a painting I made using different layers and collage.

Keep the theme simple during the session.

It does not have to make chronological sense.

play with layers of magazines and paint,

tearing to reveal the layer below and then covering it again.